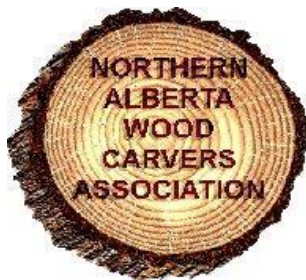


NORTHERN ALBERTA WOOD CARVERS ASSOCIATION



<http://www.nawca.ca> nawca@shaw.ca

March 2014

Edmonton, Alberta

Number 284

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Carving

Date: Wednesdays, Time: **6:30-9:00**

MEETINGS

The second Wednesday of the month

Location: Duggan Community League Hall
3728-106 Street, Edmonton

NAWCA SHOW AND COMPETITION

April 26 & 27 is not that far away. We are always looking for entries for the competition. Newcomers to the process should rest assured that your work is only judged against other carvings in your class and at your skill level either Juvenile, Novice, Intermediate, or Open. So don't be shy about putting something in.

The show is off to a bit of a late start but the club executive is going to pull it off with your support and volunteerism. Please give generously of your time when asked to assist in getting the show together. Volunteer sheets will start to pop up pretty quickly and we need lots of volunteers to make the show a success.

Club Learning Opportunities

Laurie Wilson Larson has put together a series of events to help us expand our carving knowledge.

April 2014 Larry Weins will talk about Power Carving bits and techniques

May 7 Laurie Wilson Larson will offer Netsuke Carving

June 4 Liew Bertsch will teach our young carvers to carve a whistle. Grandparents might like to learn this too.

June July and August we will also offer instruction in carving Christmas ornaments. Carving blanks will be available to take and get a head start on your ornaments for the festival of trees and family gifts.

Sept 3 Doug Bean will lead us through carving a ball in a cage

Oct 1 Jack Wallace will teach us to make a love spoon

Nov 4 Thierry Varem-Sanders, will teach us to sharpen our tools

December will be the annual Potluck Christmas party

And we are looking for an opportunity to present information on wood burning.

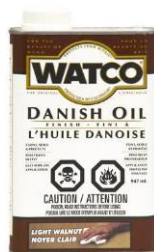
So with this list of learning opportunities carvers are going to be able to improve their skills a great deal in the next year.

Carving finishes - Pros and Cons

Thierry Varem-Sanders

No matter what kind of carving you do, it is important that you apply a surface finish as a final step. This not only improves the look of the carving, but also protects the surface from abrasion, and also stabilizes the wood by restricting water absorption. Below is a list of different finishes used in carvings, along with their advantages and disadvantages. I have compiled this information from a mixture of sources: books; the internet; my own experience; and the experience of other woodcarvers.

Danish oil, Tung oil, Swedish oil and Linseed Oil



within the wood pores. The finish rich deep tone that is quite distinctive. Oils are liberally applied with a rag, and then wiped off after a short period of time. They are by far the most popular finishes for woodcarvers. The only disadvantage of oils is that some of them can take many hours or even days to dry and cure. However, several mixtures include powerful driers and hardeners to promote faster curing Lee Valley Polymerized Tung Oil is my favorite because it cures overnight). **(Warning - rags soaked in these oils are subject to heating as they cure, and can burst into flames after prolonged exposure to air. Dispose by soaking in water and in an airtight steel container).**

These are all wipe-on/wipe-off oil finishes and are by far the easiest finishes to apply. Even novices can produce professional results. These finishes are all oil based and usually contain a “curing” component dissolved in the oil. They all cure inside the wood grain, producing a varnish like finish improves with each coat and provides a

Paste



Wax: (floor wax)

Paste waxes are often used on top of other finishes to add water repellency to the finish. As such they are particularly useful when applied over water based finishes (see below). Wax is also used as a primary finish, but lacks the strength of other

finishes, and so, if used alone, should be primarily used on more durable woods such as oak or walnut. You can mix your own past wax using a mixture of Bees wax, turpentine, and carnauba wax. Many wood carvers have their own favorite wax mixtures that they swear produce the best finish imaginable. One problem with wax as a finish is that it tends to build up in cracks and crevices if too much is applied. Therefore, always apply only very thin coats, brushing and wiping off the excess. Several thin coats produce a superior finish to one thick coat. If you do get a wax buildup, then it can be removed using wax or paint strippers, although the finish usually needs to be re-applied afterwards. Paste waxes are getting harder to find in grocery stores, but several stain manufacturers such as MINWAX still produce them.

Laquer: (acrylic or nitrocellulose laquer)



Laquer can be applied as a liquid or spray. It dries very quickly to a clear hard finish with little yellowing. Each coat partially melts the previous coat, so it bonds very well to itself and is easily repaired with a light sanding and re-applying. It is somewhat waterproof, but does not typically contain UV inhibitors so is not recommended for outdoor carvings. Common brands

are Deft and Krylon, but many spray-on clear enamel finishes are actually laquers (and are often much less expensive). The primary disadvantage of laquer is that its solvents contain toluene, xylene and/or acetone; all of which are both toxic and carcinogenic. **Use in well ventilated conditions.** In spite of this restriction, laquer is very popular for wood sealing/priming as well as an exceptional finish in its own right. It can also be used as a protective clear coat over a painted carving because of its high clarity..

Oil based Varnish: (alkyd and spar varnishes)



Alkyd varnish is a traditional finish and still forms the base for most oil based paints. It is usually applied by brush, but can be thinned with paint thinner and sprayed. Older formulas were slow drying, but some faster formulas now exist (ie: Benjamin Moore 1 hour varnish). It usually adds a slight yellowish cast to the wood; which is pleasing to some, but objectionable to others. It does not bond with itself, so needs to be scuff

sanded between coats to adhere. Most formulas are water resistant. **Spar Varnish** is specialized for marine use and is both waterproof and UV resistant - excellent for outdoor carvings.

Oil based Polyurethane:



Polyurethane varnish is a very durable oil based finish that cures to a hard plastic coating. Because of this durability it is slowly replacing the traditional varnishes. Like other varnishes, it can produce a yellowish cast and doesn't bond well to itself, so requires a scuffing between coats. It is a more difficult to apply than other finishes, but is water resistant,

and is one of the most durable indoor finishes. Some are available with UV protectors for outdoor use. Note that it applies more evenly if thinned about 30% with an oil based solvent and applied with cheese cloth rather than a brush.

Water based varnishes:



Water based varnishes are actually a mixture of an oil based varnish and an emulsifier, so that the oil droplets break up in the water phase. They have similarities to their oil based equivalents, but they are usually non-yellowing, produce no hazardous fumes, and clean up with water. However, one notable disadvantage is that the finish is usually porous; thus they can be susceptible

to water damage. Therefore, on carvings, it is often a good idea to apply a paste wax over the final cured finish to improve its resistance to water. Water based finishes are recommended for those who are sensitive to solvents or those who work in poorly ventilated areas. Some manufacturers claim UV and water resistance, but I haven't encountered any carvers who have tested these finishes for outdoor work.

Shellac:



Shellac is the only alcohol (methyl hydrate) based finish in current use. It brushes on very thin, bonds to itself, and is easily repaired. The color varies from brownish to fairly clear, depending on grade. Although it was a common traditional finish in years past, it is now primarily used as an end grain sealer, and to promote even absorption of stains and coloured finishes on woods such as birch and maple. It is not a durable finish and is easily damaged by water. Nonetheless, some wood workers swear by it as their primary finish. Shellac is available at most paint distributors, and Lee Valley Tools markets the dry shellac resins. Note that liquid shellac degrades rapidly over a scant few months and so should be purchased or mixed only as needed.

No matter what finish you use on a carving, try to avoid using high gloss finishes. These finishes produce too much glinting from room lights, making the details of the carving difficult to see. Most finishes can be purchased in a matt or satin, which are far more preferable on a carving, and show better under more varied lighting conditions.

- TVS -

We can all thank Thierry for writing this article

Hello All You Carvers Out There!

Time to dig out those carving tools and come for some fun!
We are trying something different this year.

"CAMP-OUT - Carving Retreat Style",
at the Jensen House, Rock Mountain House, Alberta
May 9, 10,11

- People who would like to come and camp in the yard are more that welcome. If you need hook-ups, there is the Riverside Campground, 200 meters away.

Anyone wanting to join us for just the day come on out! Please feel free to pass this information along to interested carvers.

- Two huge tents will be set up with tables. Please bring your own chairs.

If you are a "Night Carver", bring your own extension cord and light.

- **Saturday** supper will be potluck. Bring your own plates and utensils. All meals are up to you.

There is a campfire and BBQ if you need it to cook. Fridge space is not available.

- There will be a \$5.00 charge per person to cover the cost of mail, signs, port-a-potty, etc.
- We live 2 miles west of Rocky Mountain House, on Highway 11, going towards Nordegg. First turn north as you cross the North Saskatchewan River Bridge. Gray House with white trim. Canada flag in the front yard.

Signs will be posted. Here is my cell number incase you get lost 403-844-1540.

If you require more information, please leave me a message at 403-845-6697 or email calljensens@gmail.com

Looking Forward to Seeing You and All Your Show-and-Tell.
Carmen

PS***** Feel free to bring your musical instruments for the evening campfire!!!!

A Word from our Sponsors....

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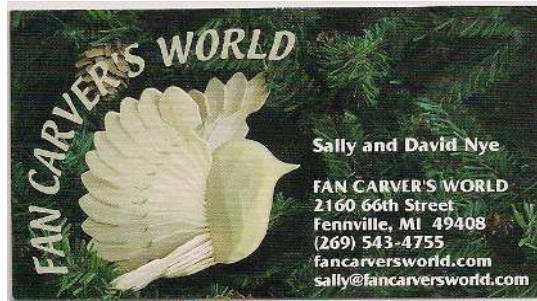
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